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State of Illinois

# ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Mary A. Gade, Director

217/782-6760

2200 Churchill Road, Springfield, IL 62794-9276

December 3, 1996

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USEPA - Office of Superfund, SR-6J

77 West Jackson Blvd.

Chicago Ill. 60604-3590

Attn: William Muno, Director

SUPERFUND DIVISION  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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Dear Mr. Muno:

This letter is in response to your letter of October 21, 1996 concerning the Sauget Area I proposed NPL site.

First, I wanted to thank you for your support in IEPA's efforts to reach a settlement with Monsanto and other PRPs in the Sauget area. As you mentioned, to get to this point has cost IEPA in excess of \$1.5 million and USEPA a similar, if not greater amount. Your staff and mine have invested a great deal of time on analyzing PRP information request responses and gathering other liability evidence. Our mutual investment on this project has not been wasted and has, in fact, convinced the PRP group that the government will begin remedial activities in this area soon if they do not.

We have had further discussions with Monsanto on the conditions for deferral of the NPL listing. We have required an enforceable decree, a commitment to construct the remedy(s) and other stringent requirements as conditions for NPL deferral. Monsanto has committed to submit a proposal in December which should enable us to begin to negotiate a consent decree in January. We have informed Monsanto that we will have less than six months to complete these negotiations. We expect that during this period that USEPA will proceed with the NPL listing and with formal responses to Monsanto's and Cerro Copper's comments on the NPL listing. I am also hopeful that USEPA can complete its last round of information request letters and can provide notice of liability to all PRPs.

Lastly, I do not believe that IEPA and USEPA need to conduct duplicative negotiations on this site. We intend to achieve either an NCP consistent decree or to conclude that the PRPs do not wish to do quality remedial work. Your staff will be invited to attend negotiations or we can update you regularly to assure USEPA that CERCLA is being complied with. If we are not successful in our negotiations with Monsanto, I believe we should proceed immediately with a fund lead RI/FS that also augments our liability information.

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If you have any questions regarding this letter, don't hesitate to contact me or Terry Ayers. We hope to discuss this further at the Year End Meeting.

Respectfully,

Bill

William C. Child, Chief  
Bureau of Land

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cc: Larry Eastep  
Terry Ayers  
Paul Takacs